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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the role played by an office of institutional research in developing a new student evaluation of teaching protocol. At Southeastern Louisiana University, a comprehensive 4-year public institution, the administration appointed a campus-wide committee to study the student evaluations of teaching and to make recommendations for improvement. Nine aspects of the process were examined, including the philosophy behind the evaluations; prior years' evaluations; computerized data reporting; confidentiality issues; administrative and personal use of results; whether or not evaluations were mandatory; and evaluation of nontraditional classes. In fall 1995 a new evaluation instrument was pilot-tested, refined, and administered to 43 class sections (n=1,100), following which interviews were conducted with five classes. Following distribution of pilot data, six faculty members were interviewed in depth. The final report was presented to the faculty committee charged with developing the final instrument, which was developed with the help of analyses provided by the institutional research department. In fall 1997, implementation of the student evaluations of teaching program was transferred to the institutional research office, thus ensuring continuing quality of the instrument. Appended are the pilot-test questionnaire, a response form, interview protocols, suggestions for evaluating pilot data, and copies of the current instrument. (CH)

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The Role of Institutional Research in Student Evaluations of Teaching

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AIR
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This paper was presented at the Thirty-Eighth Annual Forum of the Association for Institutional Research held in Minneapolis, Minnesota, May 17-20, 1998.
This paper was reviewed by the AIR Forum Publications Committee and was judged to be of high quality and of interest to others concerned with the research of higher education. It has therefore been selected to be included in the ERIC Collection of AIR Forum Papers.

Dolores Vura
Editor
AIR Forum Publications

The Role of Institutional Research in Student Evaluations of Teaching

Abstract:

One of the most critical issues for faculty at any university is student evaluation of teaching. Pragmatically, student evaluations can impact faculty tenure. promotion, salary, merit pay, teaching assignments, and collegial professional regard. This paper will explore the roles that an office of institutional research can play in developing a new student evaluation of teaching system. The paper will recount the experiences of an office in serving as technical consultants for the design and gathering of pilot test data; in serving as analysts for instrument reliability and validation; and in serving as resources for policy discussion.

History of Revisions to Student Evaluations of Teaching at SLU

Southeastern Louisiana University is a comprehensive four-year public university which has seen a dramatic increase in enrollment over the past decade. The university's primary focus is teaching. Thus, while research productivity is considered, teaching is the major basis for hiring and promotion of faculty. Since the late 1980's, SLU has used a Likert scale in student evaluations of teaching. The Student Opinion of Teaching (SOT) program has two primary objectives. The first is as a mechanism to provide feedback to faculty members in their efforts to improve classroom teaching. The second objective is as a tool to be used in merit/tenure/promotion decisions. Due to the nature of the institution, the SOT program plays a prominent role in assessing teaching effectiveness.

For a number of years, the University had administered the SOT program utilizing a ten-item scale. In the early 1990's, the Faculty Senate raised questions about the usefulness of the information provided from the evaluations. At that time only data on the item means was provided, and faculty felt that other information would also be useful. Further investigation by the Faculty Senate found that there was no written comprehensive policy concerning the origination or use of student evaluations of teaching. Thus, the Faculty Senate passed a resolution asking the administration to appoint a campus-wide committee to study student evaluations of teaching and make recommendations on how to improve them.

This resolution suggested that nine aspects of the student evaluation process in particular be examined. These aspects were:

- The philosophy or purposes for the existence of the evaluations and the reasons for gathering this data;

- Computer analysis and storage of evaluations from previous years;
- Evaluations of classes held during the summer session;
- Computerized reporting of data which would include measures of central tendency and variability;
- Issues of confidentiality, especially for off-campus courses;
- Administrative and personal uses of the results;
- Whether or not the evaluations were mandatory or optional, and to which classes this applied;
- Evaluation of non-traditional classes (e.g. team-taught courses, telecourses); and
- The use of the evaluations as only one of several evaluative measures.

In Fall 1993, the provost appointed a committee to examine these issues and provide recommendations. This committee was composed of members representing the five colleges within the University, the Faculty Senate, the SGA, and the Office of Testing. The committee was chaired by the Director of Outcomes Assessment. The Provost gave the committee the charge of reviewing and studying all aspects of the student evaluation of teaching program and making recommendations for revisions and refinements.

This committee started by reviewing the literature, looking at models used by other universities, and collecting input from a wide range of faculty. In the first year of existence, the committee developed a working definition of teaching effectiveness, developed a preliminary list of behaviors which exemplified the definition of teaching effectiveness, collected input from faculty about their concerns with student evaluations of teaching, and recommended a more detailed reporting of results. The new components in the reporting of results included item

frequencies, standard deviations, and the number of students enrolled vs the number of completed instruments.

The committee then divided into two sub-groups. One sub-group worked on developing detailed policies and procedures for the administration of student evaluations of teaching, which included policies regarding the storage and destruction of data collected. The second subcommittee worked on instrumentation. They developed a 63-item instrument to be pilot tested.

Pilot Testing

In the Fall of 1995, the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment was contacted to provide the technical expertise to pilot test two instruments, a quantitative, scaled instrument and a qualitative instrument. The faculty committee had developed a scale which identified five different behavioral domains within the evaluation of teaching. This domains were Planning and Management, Classroom Environment (Acceptance and Openness), Enhancement of Learning, Evaluation of Student Progress, and Types of Learning. The pilot instrument consisted of eleven items in the area of Planning and Management, eight items in the area of Classroom Environment, eighteen items in the area of Enhancement of Learning, ten items in the area of Evaluation of Student Progress, ten items in the area of Types of Learning, six general items, and four demographic items. Also included in the pilot test was a narrative response form which asked students to comment on the strengths of the course, suggestions for the course, and suggestions for the instructor. A complete copy of the pilot instruments can be found in Appendices A and B.

In working with the committee, Institutional Research decided that a two-pronged approach to the pilot testing would provide the most valuable data. A traditional pilot test was conducted by giving the large set of items to a sample of classes and analyzing the results according to traditional psychometric practice. Furthermore, interviews with students, faculty and department heads were conducted to obtain further information on the validity of the instrument, the clarity of directions, policy issues, and the ease of administration. Table 1 outlines the timeline followed for the pilot test.

Table 1

Timeline for SOT Pilot Test

Dates	Activity
November 13th - November 17th, 1995	Collected pilot data in selected sample of classes
November 20th - November 24th, 1995	Conducted group interviews with students
November - End of Semester, 1995	Analysis of quantitative data
Spring Semester Between 1st and 3rd Week, 1996	Pilot SOT Reports and narratives sent to faculty and Department Heads who participated
Spring Semester Between 4th and 5th Weeks, 1996	Conducted individual interviews with selected faculty and Department Heads
March 1996	Presented report to faculty committee
March - End of Spring Semester, 1996	Did further analyses. Committee reviewed and discussed report in order to make recommendations
Summer 1996	University Academic Affairs Council reviewed and approved changes in forms and procedures for use in Fall 1996
Fall 1996	New instrument and procedures implemented for the first time

Throughout the entire pilot test, the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment considered the Student Opinion of Teaching instrument and the instructional evaluation process as vitally important to SLU students and faculty, not only in terms of improving teaching and

learning but also in terms of making important decisions about tenure, promotion, and merit. Thus the office attempted to make the pilot testing process as technically sound as possible, while allowing for instructors to volunteer for participation and controlling for the confidentiality of results. The use of volunteer instructors was necessary to the process, as participating in the pilot involved giving up class time at the end of the semester. For those classes which participated, the SOTs were administered twice. In addition, some classes had to give up class time so that an Institutional Research staff member could come in and interview the class. It should be noted that the Institutional Research office, being external to the SOT committee, provided an increased measure of process validity in that the office did not have input into the instruments nor did the office make substantive recommendations for change after the pilot.

Participants

A stratified sampling procedure identified a target population of large lecture classes, small lecture classes, and lab/activity classes, further stratified by level (undergraduate and graduate) and the tenure status of the instructor for a total of 12 combinations of class type, level and instructor type. In the fall semester, department heads were contacted to suggest target sample classes in the 12 categories. Department Heads were informed up front that participation in the pilot would probably consist of:

- administering the new instrument (Likert-scaled items and open-ended narrative form questions) as designed by the SOT Committee to students in selected classes;

- allowing an Institutional Research and Assessment staff member to do a short group interview with selected classes to get feedback on administration and readability;
- allowing an Institutional Research and Assessment staff member to do a confidential interview with the instructor (small purposive sample) after the SOT results had been distributed in January; and
- allowing an Institutional Research and Assessment staff member to do a confidential interview with the department head (small purposive sample) on the utility of the new instrument.

After suggesting classes for participation, department heads were asked to verify with those faculty members affected that the pilot testing would not pose a problem with the class schedule. The selected sample consisted of 43 sections with a projected enrollment of over 1,100 students. Table 2 shows how many sections were in each of the stratification levels.

Table 2

Stratification of Target Sample

	Large lecture		Small lecture		Activity/lab	
Faculty Status	**UG**	**G**	**UG**	**G**	**UG**	**G**
Tenured	4	3	5	3	2	0
Tenure-Track	4	1	4	3	2	1
Other	5	0	2	0	3	0

Method

Following the distribution of the then current instrument, 43 class sections (n≈1100) were administered the pilot instrument. Following the administration of the pilot, a purposive sample of six classes of students were selected to be interviewed regarding the pilot. Due to circumstances beyond the researcher's control (the instructor became ill and canceled class), one of the interviews did not take place. Two of the five classes interviewed were graduate classes, while three were undergraduate classes. Three of the instructors were non-tenured, tenure track, and two were tenured. Three of the classes were small lecture classes, and two were activity/lab classes. Large lecture classes were purposively left out of the interviews due to the problems inherent in interviewing a large number of students at once. These interviews covered students' opinions regarding the relevance, importance and understanding of the items (for both the Likert-type items and the open-ended items), opinion of the procedure for administering the instrument, and comparing the pilot version to the current version. A copy of the protocol followed for interviewing students (and the protocols for faculty and department heads) can be found in Appendix C.

Following the distribution of preliminary reports based on the pilot test data, six faculty members were interviewed in-depth. Two of the faculty were tenured, two were non-tenured, tenure track, and two were non-tenure track. The faculty members' classes which participated in the pilot included two graduate classes and four undergraduate classes. Furthermore, three of the classes were small lecture, two were large lecture, and one was an activity/lab. These interviews covered their reactions to the pilot items (both Likert-type and open-ended items), the reporting of the data, comparisons with the current instrument, their plans for using the instrument in

course improvement, and reactions they observed from students. A copy of the protocol followed for interviewing faculty can be found in Appendix C.

Also, after the preliminary reports had been distributed, six department heads, representing the four Colleges of the University were interviewed in-depth. These interviews covered department heads reactions to the pilot items (both Likert-type and open-ended items), the reporting of the data, comparisons with the current instrument, their thoughts on being provided with a copy of the written comments, concerns regarding the instruments impact on tenure and/or promotion, and reactions they observed from students and faculty. A copy of the protocol followed for interviewing faculty can be found in Appendix B.

Summary - Results of the Pilot Test

Overall, there was a total of 903 participants. Of the total, 22% (n=196) were Freshmen, 17% (n=151) were Sophomores, 17% (n=153) were Juniors, 21% (n=190) were Seniors, 16% (n=143) were Graduate students, 1% (n=11) indicated Other, and 7% (n=59) did not indicate their class. The vast majority (75%, n=675) indicated that the course was required in their major, 18% (n=158) were taking the class as an elective, and 7% (n=70) did not give an indication of whether or not the class was required.

Twenty-three percent (23%, n=211) indicated they had a cumulative GPA in the range of 3.50-4.00, 24% (n=215) in the range of 3.00-3.49, 31% (n=277) in the range of 2.50-2.99, 12% (n=112) in the range of 2.00-2.49, 2% (n=19) less than 2.00, and 8% (n=69) did not indicate their GPA range. Finally, the majority of students expected to get an A in the course (41%, n=373), 32% (n=292) expected a B, 15% (n=137) expected a C, 3% (n=26) expected a D, and only 1 student (.1%) expected to fail. The remaining 8% (n=74) did not indicate an expected grade.

Table 3 presents a summary table of participants by section. The first column (Sample Code) refers to the sampling scheme group. The first number in the code refers to whether the class was an undergraduate or graduate level class (1 = undergraduate, 2 = graduate). The second number refers to the status of the instructor (1 = tenured, 2 = tenure-track, non-tenured, and 3 = non-tenure track). The last number refers to the type of class (1 = a large lecture class [undergrad greater than 40 and graduate greater than 20], 2 = small lecture class, and 3 = activity or lab class). Thus, for example, 123 refers to an undergraduate laboratory class taught by a tenure track, non-tenured faculty member. The second column (Number Enrolled) is the number of students enrolled in the class according to official class rosters. The third column (Number of Responses) is the number of students who actually completed the quantitative instrument. The fourth column (% Responded) is the percent of students officially enrolled who completed the quantitative portion. The fifth column (Number of Comments) is the number of narrative forms which actually contained written comments. The last column (% of Comments) is the percent of students who wrote open-ended comments, based on the number of students who responded to the numerical items in each section.

Table 3

Summary of Participants by Section

Sample Code	Number Enrolled	Number of Responses	% Responded	Number of Comments	% Comments
111	55	42	76.36%	36	85.71%
111	33	29	87.88%	28	96.55%
111	40	33	82.50%	26	78.79%
111	93	65	69.89%	0	0.00%
112	17	15	88.24%	14	93.33%
112	12	12	100.00%	10	83.33%
112	21	16	76.19%	16	100.00%
112	16	11	68.75%	5	45.45%
113	20	17	85.00%	16	74.12%
113	20	13	65.00%	11	84.62%
121	39	31	79.49%	28	90.32%
121	32	27	84.38%	19	70.37%
121	32	23	71.88%	17	73.91%
121	35	33	94.29%	18	54.55%
122	29	23	79.31%	19	82.64%
122	20	16	80.00%	14	87.50%
122	20	12	60.00%	12	100.00%
123	16	15	93.75%	11	73.33%
123	15	14	93.33%	11	78.57%
123	33	29	87.88%	21	72.41%
131	32	29	90.63%	24	82.76%
131	32	18	56.25%	16	88.89%
131	47	38	80.85%	29	76.32%
131	38	23	60.53%	17	73.91%
131	63	42	66.67%	37	88.10%
132	24	20	83.33%	20	100.00%

Table 3 cont.
Summary of Participants by Section

Sample Code	Number Enrolled	Number of Responses	% Responded	Number of Comments	% Comments
132	21	15	71.43%	15	100.00%
132	27	21	77.78%	19	90.48%
133	27	23	85.19%	23	100.00%
133	36	30	833.33%	25	83.33%
133	16	14	87.50%	14	100.00%
211	21	18	85.71%	18	100.00%
211	20	18	90.00%	18	100.00%
211	35	31	88.57%	27	87.10%
212	22	20	90.91%	10	50.00%
212	6	6	100.00%	5	83.33%
212	8	8	100.00%	8	100.00%
221	28	22	78.57%	20	90.91%
222	10	9	90.00%	7	77.78%
222	9	9	100.00%	8	88.89%
222	10	9	90.00%	8	88.89%
223	4	4	100.00%	4	100.00%
Total: 42 Sections	1134	903	79.63%	704	77.96%

Report to the Committee

Institutional Research prepared a report which included a frequency distribution, mean, median and standard deviation for each scaled item. Also included in the report were inter-item correlations for each of the previously defined behavioral domains as well as the correlations between the domains. Also included were Cronbach Alpha Reliability estimates for each domain and an exploratory factor analysis. Finally, the report included summaries of all the interviews

that were conducted, and suggestions and caveats for interpreting the data and evaluating administration and other procedural issues. The concerns and suggestions for interpretation and evaluation can be found in Appendix D.

Institutional Research staff presented this report to the faculty committee charged with developing the new instrument and to the Deans' Council. Included in the presentations were suggestions and comments based on the data in regards to policy implications.

Due to the sensitive nature of the topic, its impact on faculty and academic policy, and its role in the process, Institutional Research did not make rigid recommendations regarding which items should be included in the new instrument or the policy changes that needed to be made. Theses decisions needed to be reached by consensus of the faculty committee. However neither did Institutional Research simply present the report and disappear. Institutional Research staff continued to work with the committee, providing further analyses, reiterating the limitations of the data, and steering the committee away from non-data driven decisions.

Based on our analyses, the committee developed a quantitative instrument composed of twenty-four items and three demographic items. There are five items in the Planning and Management domain, five items in the Classroom Environment (Acceptance and Openness) domain, six items in the Enhancement of Learning domain, five items in the Evaluation of Student Progress domain, and three general items. The committee also recommended that a copy of all narrative forms be distributed to the faculty members, their respective department heads and deans. Furthermore, the committee recommended that the SOT be given at the beginning of each class period rather than the end; that for courses such as practica, internships and independent studies, departments develop their own methods of obtaining feedback; that SOTs

be administered during the summer semester. In summer 1996, the new Student Opinion of Teaching form was approved by the Academic Affairs Council. The narrative form permits students to comment on strengths suggestions for improvement for the instructor, the activities and tests, the books and materials, and the classroom environment. A copy of the current SOT instruments can be found in Appendix E.

Conclusions

The new student evaluation of teaching system has been in place for two years. The scope and role of Institutional Research in regards to student evaluation of teaching has increased over the past two years. When the new instrument was first used, the Office of Testing oversaw the administration, storing, and reporting process. In June 1997, the implementation of the student evaluations of teaching program was transferred to Institutional Research. The office added a new staff person whose main responsibility is overseeing the SOT process.

There are several benefits to housing the process within the Institutional Research Office. One of the benefits is that Institutional Research now has access to the data, and thus can fulfill requests from campus constituents such as Deans and the Provost who ask for special analyses of aggregate data. For example, the office has done a study for one of the Colleges which examined the relationship between student evaluations and grade inflation. The office has done a study for another College which looked at whether there was a difference in SOT scores between undergraduate classes and graduate courses.

Housing the process within the Institutional Research Office also ensures that the office will have continuing technical input as modifications and changes to the instrument and process occur. For any university this input from Institutional Research may be helpful since the

psychometric and statistical expertise needed can often be found within the IR office. Another benefit may be that the IR office has no vested interest in the processes or outcomes, so the office can be viewed as an impartial third party. A final benefit is that as states move further towards issues of accountability, the IR office plays a major role, and student evaluations of teaching can be an important part of performance indicator systems.

In the Future

More instrument research will be necessary to insure the continuing quality of the instrument. Institutional Research is not taking sole responsibility for the direction of this research, but is working with the faculty committee to help guide the research. In the future the office will collect information on faculty perceptions of the instrument as course evaluation tools. In addition, surveys of deans and department heads will center on the utility of current reporting formats and the policy manual. Furthermore, focus group sessions with selected graduate and undergraduate student groups will target perceptions regarding ease of completion and clarity.

The Institutional Research office is also working with departments offering classes for which the current instrument is not appropriate (e.g. independent study, pratica, etc.) by helping them develop more appropriate instruments. For example, the office is currently working with the School of Nursing to pilot test an instrument for evaluating its clinical labs. The nature of these labs is such that the current instrument is clearly not appropriate. Faculty in the School of Nursing developed items which they felt were appropriate based on the literature and their own experiences. These questions were then brought to the Institutional Research office which then advised them on technical aspects of item writing, developed an instrument for them and is currently collecting data which will be used to help finalize an instrument to be implemented

starting in Fall 1998. As another example, the office has also worked with a Distance Education Committee to develop an instrument which is more appropriate to courses which are taught at least 50% on the Internet. This instrument is being used this semester for the first time. During the summer, the office will work with a committee to develop an instrument which is appropriate for use with compressed video courses, and the instrument will be used in Fall 1998 for the first time.

Institutional Research has also worked with the faculty committee and University Academic Affairs Council to refine the policy manual which outlines the procedures for administering the Student Opinion of Teaching program. Due to the political climate on campus, the original decision of the SOT committee to share narratives with department heads and deans was not implemented. Recently the Academic Affairs Council reevaluated this decision and has approved a pilot program which will allow for students' narrative comments to be shared with the faculty member's department head. Part of the impetus for this pilot program came from data Institutional Research collected during the pilot test of the instrument. Also included in the pilot are guidelines for the evaluation of narrative comments. Theses guidelines were developed with the assistance of Institutional Research staff. This new program will be implemented in Fall 1998 and will be reviewed a year later.

The Institutional Research office also has responsibility for maintaining and updating the policy manual for the Student Opinion of Teaching program. This manual has been provided to all deans and department heads, and the office is also responsible for maintaining a World Wide Web version of the manual. The current manual can be found on the web at:

www.selu.edu/Administration/Institutional-Research/IE/sotpol.htm

The manual is currently in the process of being revised, and revisions to the policy should be posted to the web by mid-summer.

Within the next year, Institutional Research will also begin working with a newly created faculty development office, the Center for Faculty Excellence. This new office within the division of Academic Affairs will provide professional development programs for faculty and will concentrate on improving teaching and classroom assessment. Student evaluation of teaching results will be aggregated at the college and university level to provide data about the teaching performance indicators. Such data can be analyzed by course level, curriculum component level (i.e., general education requirement, course in the major, etc.), and faculty rank to provide insights about needed professional development programming and objectives. In addition, complementary methods of assessing classroom teaching is being discussed on campus, and the IR office

In summary, an office of institutional research should not be reluctant to engage in the arena of student teaching evaluations if it can offer qualified technical expertise and sound advice on continued research and development of such systems. Indeed, in today's transformational higher education environment, institutional research offices should seek opportunities to provide leadership in important areas like the improvement of university teaching. This leadership role provides an institutional research office the opportunity to work closely with faculty and campus administration, and enter into a dialogue on an issue of importance to the entire campus community.

Appendix A

Student Opinion of Teaching Questionnaire

Pilot Test - Quantitative Form

SOUTHEASTERN LOUISIANA UNIVERSITY

STUDENT OPINION OF TEACHING QUESTIONNAIRE (REVISED)

PILOT TEST, FALL 1995

To Participating Students:

This pilot version of the SLU Student Opinion of Teaching questionnaire requires that you use a general purpose scanning sheet for your answers. Please be sure to blacken the appropriate circles completely.

On side 1 of the form, fill in the course computer number in the section marked "Identification Number." Also fill in the "Special Codes" section with a number that will be given to you by the instructor. You do not need to fill in any other section on the left-hand portion of Side 1.

Read each item on the Student Opinion of Teaching Questionnaire carefully and fill in the circles under the appropriate columns to indicate your response to each item. Be sure to also complete the demographic items at the end of the questionnaire.

You have also been given a carbonless form for your comments about the course and the instructor. Please fill in the instructor's name and the course computer number at the top of the form. Your responses to the questions about the course and the instructor will provide information that will be used by the faculty and the department for course and instructional improvement.

You will have approximately 15 minutes to complete the forms. When you have finished with the forms, please return all materials to the envelope. A student from your class will return the materials to the department office.

Your feedback is important to us!

Thank you for your participation!

Planning and Management	**Never**					**Always**
1. Course learning objectives are clearly stated	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. My responsibilities and expectations for learning are clearly stated.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. Course activities are well-organized	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. Class activities help me achieve the learning objectives of the course.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. Out-of-class assignments help me achieve course objectives.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. Out-of-class assignments are integrated with class activities	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. Learning objectives for each class are clearly stated	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. The instructor is well-prepared for class	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. The instructor begins and ends class on time	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. The instructor uses time efficiently for teaching and learning	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. The instructor uses learning activities that motivate me to learn	1	2	3	4	5	6
Classroom Environment						
12. The classroom environment contributes to my learning	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. The instructor maintains an atmosphere of mutual courtesy	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. The instructor is enthusiastic about teaching this course	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. The instructor is enthusiastic about my learning in this course	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. The instructor demonstrates interest in my learning/progress in this course	1	2	3	4	5	6
17. The instructor is sensitive to my needs and feelings	1	2	3	4	5	6
18. The instructor is willing to provide help and guidance outside of class	1	2	3	4	5	6
19. I am encouraged to participate in class discussions/activities	1	2	3	4	5	6
Enhancement of Learning						
20. The instructor's speech is clear and easy to understand	1	2	3	4	5	6
21. The instructor arouses and maintains my interest in the subject	1	2	3	4	5	6
22. Teaching methods stimulate my involvement in learning	1	2	3	4	5	6
23. Course content is at an appropriate level of difficulty	1	2	3	4	5	6
24. The instructor makes clear all directions and explanations related to course content.	1	2	3	4	5	6

	Never					Always
25. The instructor assists me in organizing information	1	2	3	4	5	6
26. The instructor clearly explains difficult material	1	2	3	4	5	6
27. The instructor helps me understand relationships among the topics in the course	1	2	3	4	5	6
28. The instructor summarizes topics before moving to new topics	1	2	3	4	5	6
29. The instructor summarizes important topics or ideas at the end of class	1	2	3	4	5	6
30. The instructor clearly answers students' questions	1	2	3	4	5	6
31. Te instructor carries out learning activities at an appropriate pace	1	2	3	4	5	6
32. The instructor asks thought-provoking questions	1	2	3	4	5	6
33. The instructor asks questions that allow me to compare and contrast ideas	1	2	3	4	5	6
34. The instructor realizes when students are confused and clarifies as needed	1	2	3	4	5	6
35. I receive periodic feedback about my learning progress	1	2	3	4	5	6
36. Teaching aids (e.g., audio-visual material) are used to enhance my learning	1	2	3	4	5	6
37. I am encourage to apply course content to real life situations and/or practice	1	2	3	4	5	6
Evaluation of Student Progress						
38. The instructor has made clear the basis for grading	1	2	3	4	5	6
39. The instructor has an appropriate balance among tests, assignments, projects, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	6
40. Tests and other evaluations of my learning reflect the course content	1	2	3	4	5	6
41. Test items are clearly written	1	2	3	4	5	6
42. Tests are of reasonable length	1	2	3	4	5	6
43. Tests/other evaluations provide a fair chance to demonstrate achievement	1	2	3	4	5	6
44. The instructor grades assignments and tests fairly	1	2	3	4	5	6
45. The instructor returns assignments/tests within a reasonable length of time	1	2	3	4	5	6
46. I receive sufficient feedback on all graded work	1	2	3	4	5	6
47. I know where I stand academically during the course	1	2	3	4	5	6

Types of Learning						
	Never					**Always**
48. The instructor emphasizes learning factual information	1	2	3	4	5	6
49. The instructor encourages students to help develop concepts	1	2	3	4	5	6
50. The instructor actively involves me in understanding/applying principles and rules	1	2	3	4	5	6
51. The instructor actively involves me in understanding and applying theories	1	2	3	4	5	6
52. The instructor actively involves me in using problem-solving skills	1	2	3	4	5	6
53. The instructor encourages me to think creatively	1	2	3	4	5	6
54. Course activities enhance my knowledge of self and others	1	2	3	4	5	6
55. Course activities enhance my professional, career, and job-related skills	1	2	3	4	5	6
56. Course activities enhance the development of my writing skills	1	2	3	4	5	6
57. Course activities enhance the development of my speaking skills	1	2	3	4	5	6
In My Opinion...	**Poor**					**Excellent**
58. The quality of instruction was...	1	2	3	4	5	6
59. Contribution of the course to my learning was...	1	2	3	4	5	6
60. Contribution of the course to my professional preparation was...	1	2	3	4	5	6
61. Overall value of the course was...	1	2	3	4	5	6
62. Chances I would choose to take this instructor again are...	1	2	3	4	5	6
63. Books and materials were...	1	2	3	4	5	6

Student Demographics

64. My student classification is
1=Freshmen
2=Sophomore
3=Junior
4=Senior
5=Graduate
6=Other

65. My cumulative GPA is
1=3.50-4.00
2=3.00-3.49
3=2.50-2.99
4=2.00-2.49
5=Less than 2.0

66. The course is
1=Required in my major
2=An elective in my major

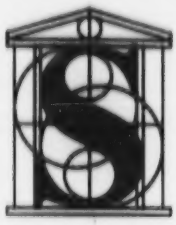
67. Expected grade for the course is (bubble in A, B, C, D, or F)

Appendix B

Student Opinion of Teaching Instrument

Pilot Narrative Response Form

SOUTHEASTERN LOUISIANA UNIVERSITY



STUDENT OPINION OF TEACHING
NARRATIVE RESPONSE FORM

Instructor's Name: _____

Course Computer Number: _____

Please write out your comments to the following:

The strengths of the course were...

My suggestions for the course are...

My suggestions for the instructor are...

White copy – Instructor Yellow copy – Institutional Research and Assessment

Appendix C

Interview Protocols

Protocol for Interviewing Students

I'm Michelle Hall from Institutional Research and Assessment. You recently took a new form of the Student Opinion of Teaching. It has been expanded to 65 questions, instead of only 10. This was done to allow students to more thoroughly express their opinion about the way professors teach. As part of testing the new questionnaire, I would like to ask you a few questions about it. Please feel free to say how you honestly feel about it, good or bad. Your name will never be associated with you comments. This interview will be tape recorded, but that is only so that when I am writing the report, I can go back and make sure I am accurately reflecting what you said. I would like for everyone to participate in this discussion, all of your opinions are important.

First, I want to ask you some general questions about the procedures. How was the amount of time you were given to complete the instrument? Was it too long, not long ?

Next, how were the instructions? How clear were the instructions? How could the instructions be improved?

What procedure was followed for giving the instrument? What did the professor (instructor) do while you completed the questions? How comfortable are you with the manner in which administration and collection were handled? Were you allowed the allotted time to complete it? Did the professor read the instructions? When did you take it (at start or end of class)?

Now I want to ask you some questions regarding the content of the instrument. Here are some copies of the questions that you answered. What questions were confusing? What was confusing about them? Are there questions that you think are asking the same thing?

Now, on the other hand, what questions or aspects of the class are not addressed? What would you like to have added to the questions?

As far as the open-ended questions, what did you think of those? Were they too broad, too narrow, wrong questions?

How do you feel about your written comments being shared with the professor's (instructor's) department head?

Are there any other comments you have about the instrument?

If you have comments or concerns that you don't feel like sharing in front of your peers, or that you think of later, please write them down and send them to me at the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment. Thank you for your time.

Protocol for Interviewing Faculty Members

First, I want to ask you about the reporting of the data. Were you able to understand the information you received? Was the information provided useful? Are there other types of information you would like presented? Do you have any suggestions for making the information more useful for yourself?

Make sure have copy of SOT. What about the items on the SOT? Do you think they were adequate to provide information to help improve your teaching? Were there other areas that you believe should have been addressed? Do you believe the questions were appropriate? Were they appropriate for the type of class you taught (i.e. large/small, UG/Grad, Activity/lab/lecture)? Looking at the SOT, what specific questions do you think are essential? What questions do you think are not necessary?

Moving on to the open-ended questions, do you read all the comments? Do they provide you with useful information? Do you think it is beneficial to have a separate form for the comments? Are there other questions you think should be asked in addition to, or instead of?

How do you feel about written comments being shared with your department head? Do you have any concerns about doing so?

In a more general sense, how have you, or how will you, use the information (both quantitative and qualitative) that has been provided?

How would you compare this instrument to the one previously used for the SOT? Which do you prefer? Why?

What are your concerns regarding the impact of this instrument on tenure and/or promotion?

What kind of reactions to the pilot did you observe from your students? What kind of comments did they make about it?

Do you have any other comments regarding the SOT pilot?

Protocol for Interviewing Department Heads

First, I want to ask you about the reporting of the data. Were you able to understand the information you received? Was the information provided useful? Are there other types of information you would like presented? Do you have any suggestions for making the information more useful for yourself?

Make sure have copy of SOT. What about the items on the SOT? Do you think they were adequate to provide information to help evaluate and provide feedback for your faculty? Were there other areas that you believe should have been addressed? Do you believe the questions were appropriate? Do you believe the questions were appropriate? Looking at the SOT, what specific questions do you think are essential? What questions do you think are not necessary?

Moving on to the open-ended questions, did you read all the comments? Do they provide you with useful information? Do you think it is beneficial to have a separate form for the comments? Are there other questions you think should be asked in addition to, or instead of?

How do you feel about being provided with the written comments? How do you plan on using the written comments?

In a more general sense, how have you, or how will you, use the information (both quantitative and qualitative) that has been provided?

How would you compare this instrument to the one previously used for the SOT? Which do you prefer? Why?

What are your concerns regarding the impact of this instrument on tenure and/or promotion?

What kind of reactions to the pilot did you observe from your faculty? What kind of comments did they make about it?

Do you have any other comments regarding the SOT pilot?

Appendix D

Concerns and Suggestions for Interpreting and Evaluating Pilot Data

General Conclusions

- Committee should not rely on quantitative data to make decisions about needed revisions.
  - Is the SOT norm-referenced or criterion-referenced?
  - Ceiling effect of SOT scores.
  - Quantitative and qualitative data provid a more complete picture.
- There are some basic issues that need to be addressed.
  - Quantitative instrument
    - Which items should be included?
    - Does an item contain "educational" jargon that others will not understand?
    - What demographic items need to be included?
    - Should a Not Applicable response be available? If not, items should be applicable to all types of classes.
  - Qualitative (Narrative) Instrument
    - Should a separate form be used, or should it be part of the quantitative form?
    - What should be included in the qualitative form?
  - Administrative procedures
    - What type of security is needed for the data and the forms?
    - When should SOTs be administered? At what point in the semester, when during the class?
  - Items
    - There are too many items, some need to be deleted.
    - Committee should review items in terms of redundancy and applicability.

- High reliability may be an artifact of pattern scoring and/or redundancy.
- All correlations are statistically significant at p=.01 level, an artifact of large sample size.
- The factor analysis does not confirm the dimensionality of the SOT rating scale.

- Policy Issues
  - What type of standards need to be developed for using the SOT results in promotion/tenure/merit issues?
  - What type of training, if any, need to be presented to enforce the standards?
- Interview sessions need to be carefully read as they contain many recommendations for administration and other procedural issues.

Suggested Action Plan

1. Review research on student evaluations of teaching
2. Determine the optimum number of items
3. Critically evaluate all interview responses
4. Interpret the factors – use or discard them
5. Use numerical data analysis to evaluate redundancy
6. Select items
7. Develop policies for administration and protocol (including usage standards and training)
8. Send all recommendations to the Provost

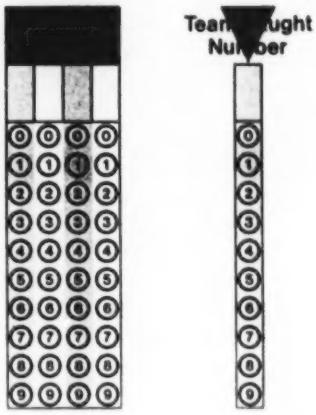
Appendix E

Current Student Opinion of Teaching Instruments

SOUTHEASTERN LOUISIANA UNIVERSITY
Student Opinion of Teaching

Directions:

- This instrument is used by faculty and administrators to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of SLU's instructors and courses.
- It is very important to completely and accurately fill in the four-digit computer number. If the box is not filled in accurately, your opinion will not be provided to your instructor. If your class is taught by more than one instructor, fill in the instructor's number in the team-taught box. If your class is taught by only one instructor, please leave the team-taught box blank.
- Read each item carefully and fill in the circle under the appropriate column to indicate your response (using a number 2 pencil). Please note that a "6" on the right side indicates you "Strongly Agree" with the statement, and a "1" on the left side indicates you "Strongly Disagree" with the statement. Complete both sides of the instrument.
- The instructor should read the instructions to the class, assign a student to deliver the questionnaires to the designated location, and allow at least 15 minutes for completion. This evaluation process should be conducted at the beginning of the class period and the instructor should leave the room after reading the instructions. Please report any deviation from these procedures to the Dean of the College offering the course. Contact the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (549-3639) for the name of the appropriate Dean.



	Strongly Disagree 1	2	3	4	5	Strongly Agree 6
Planning and Management						
1. Course activities are well organized.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
2. The instructor is well prepared for class.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
3. The instructor begins and ends class on time.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
4. The instructor avoids class cancellations.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
5. The instructor uses time efficiently for teaching and learning.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Classroom Environment (Acceptance and Openness)						
6. The instructor maintains an atmosphere of courtesy and respect in class.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
7. The instructor is enthusiastic about teaching this course.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
8. The instructor's speech is clear and understandable.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
9. The instructor is willing to provide help and guidance outside of class.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
10. The instructor is open to student questions.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Enhancement of Learning						
11. Course learning objectives are clear.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
12. The instructor attempts to interest me in the subject.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
13. The instructor helps me understand relationships among topics in the course.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
14. The instructor summarizes important topics or ideas.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
15. The instructor encourages me to relate course content to real life situations and/or practice.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
16. The instructor encourages critical thinking.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥

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Student Opinion of Teaching
Page 2

Evaluation of Student Progress	Strongly Disagree 1	2	3	4	5	Strongly Agree 6
17. Tests and other evaluations reflect the course content/assignments.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
18. **The instructor has made clear the basis for grading.**	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
19. Test items are clearly written.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
20. **Tests/other evaluations provide an opportunity to demonstrate achievement.**	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
21. The instructor provides feedback on tests and assignments.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥

For questions 22-24, a "6" on the right side indicates your opinion is "Strong" and a "1" on the left side indicates your opinion is "Weak".

In my Opinion....	Weak 1	2	3	4	5	Strong 6
22. The quality of instruction was....	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
23. **The contribution of the course to my learning or professional preparation was....**	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
24. The likelihood I would recommend this instructor to others is....	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥

A. My student classification is
- Freshman ①
- Sophomore ②
- Junior ③
- Senior ④
- Graduate ⑤
- Other ⑥

B. My cumulative GPA is
- 3.500 - 4.000 ○
- 3.000 - 3.499 ○
- 2.500 - 2.999 ○
- 2.000 - 2.499 ○
- Less than 2.000 ○
- Do Not Have One ○

C. The course is
- Required in my Major ○
- An elective in my Major ○
- Other ○

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SOUTHEASTERN LOUISIANA UNIVERSITY

Student Opinion of Teaching -- Narrative Response Form

Computer Number:	Name of Instructor:	Course:	Section Number:	Semester/Year:

	STRENGTHS	SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT
The Instructor		
The Activities and Tests		
The Books and Materials		
The Classroom (i.e., temperature, acoustics, etc.)		